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EDITORIAL

The readers of the *English Journal* can perform a needed and valuable service by "spreading the news." In a word, the larger the circulation, the better the magazine and the greater the influence exerted in the cause of good English. Many experienced teachers do not read professional magazines. They are prejudiced or indifferent and need to be converted. Most beginners—and nearly a third of the teachers of the country are beginners—do not know what professional magazines are to be had and need to be informed. Will not the friends of the *Journal* in the schools and colleges of the various states perform a real missionary service by calling the magazine to the attention of their colleagues? Such promotion is the best possible; it not only get results but it also conserves both the energy and the money necessary to increase the amount and improve the quality of the reading provided.

It is hoped that a very ready response will be made to the appeals for information concerning the preparation of teachers which are being sent out by the committees of the National Council of Teachers of English and its affiliated societies. No matter how excellent the course of study nor how favorable the conditions provided, if persons of suitable character, who know their subject and who also know how to teach it, cannot be placed in the classrooms, enormous waste must be suffered. The remarkable growth of the high schools has multiplied many times the number of teachers required, and a very large percentage of beginners is each year to be found among them. What can the colleges and normal schools do to insure the greatest possible efficiency on the part of these beginners? And since experience alone will not always produce a good teacher, what can be done to improve the work of those now in the service? The answers to these questions are of far-reaching importance and should be earnestly sought.

Nothing could be more gratifying than the cordial attitude of principals and superintendents toward the National Council. At Philadelphia in 1913, Superintendent Dyer, president of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, took occasion to remark that the new organization of English teachers was displaying most commendable zeal and enterprise. A year later at Richmond numerous supervising officers attended the sessions of the Council and praised its work. Now comes a similar report from the National Education Association meeting at St. Paul. Supervisors have been quick to recognize that the Council is honestly and intelligently seeking to help in solving some of the most important problems of the schools, and they realize that there are certain problems which instructors must solve if they are ever to be solved. All signs point to progress. Let us give thanks—and keep on working.

Everyone must be aware that educational traditions in America are being rapidly broken up. The man who ventures to argue for the good old way in which he was taught is sure of an impatient, if not a caviling, audience. The scientific spirit in education has made comfortable obedience to the unthinking laws of custom no longer possible. We are determined to know. The English teacher should face this situation cheerfully. No attempt at realness is likely to curtail his opportunities, and he has far less adjustment to make than science and history, as well as less experimentation than industrial arts and agriculture. He does have, however, the task of providing a more vital content and a more genuine motive for composition and much more far-reaching and effective content and method in reading. Many have already realized this and have moved boldly out in the attempt to develop an English course that shall really engage and form the life of the pupil. Let us hope it will not be long until all will have a better goal than that of an examination on certain prescribed books.

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